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# The Importance of Kentucky in the Civil War

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THE IMPORTANCE OF KENTUCKY  
IN THE CIVIL WAR

BY

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A Thesis submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in

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1937

## VITA

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## CHAPTER I

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### INTRODUCTION

A pre-view of Kentucky's history previous to the Civil War, explaining conditions, forces, and events, which gave her a position of importance during that period.

The State of Kentucky, the oldest Commonwealth west of the Allegheny Mountains has had bequeathed to her an heritage of geographic determinants, historical movements and sociological trends which may claim a title of distinction in the history of the Nation. A deeper knowledge of this inheritance and a broader acquaintance of those simultaneous and consecutive forces which made for this importance, are the essential elements that form a background to this study. Kentucky's ideals, traditions, achievements of the past and their causes constitute the raw material from which the attempt has been made to construct one more little block in the monument of her fame.

Kentucky's history is unique in the varied stages of its development, but a title to distinction or position of importance in the history of our nation was won during the formative period of her existence, a time when men and measures were alike on a continuous trial, building

the structure of this Commonwealth with famous deeds which shed a lustre of renown on her descendants of 1860. The first century of Kentucky's history staged the civic upheavals through which she had the satisfaction of winning the acknowledgment of the nation that her Commonwealth was important, in fact, one of the foremost of the union of states.

The variety of forces that shape the destinies of a people and make them what they are, is not perfectly revealed when the normal functions of civic life are operating in a normal manner. It is when the body-politic becomes ill-conditioned by serious maladies that the true nature of that people is recognized. Wars are diseases, internal disturbances, like critical illnesses of individuals, and granted they are unnatural accidents of development, yet they mark the stages of their developmental history in a distinctive manner.<sup>1</sup> The period of supreme test in the history of Kentucky comprised her allegiance first to the Mother Country, Virginia, later to the National Government in the first years of her statehood and then to the

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1. N. S. Shaler, Kentucky, A Pioneer Commonwealth, Houghton Mifflin Company, (New York, 1884), 172

Union, the United States of America in the conflict of 1860.

The first Kentuckians were frontiersmen of the most dauntless type, "with coon-skin cap and long rifle, reclaiming the wilderness from the savage and subduing the forces of nature."<sup>2</sup> Kentucky, called "The Dark and Bloody Ground," or "The Middle Ground," as John Filson following the practice of the Indians themselves, named it, was the disputed territory of savage tribes before the invading pioneer came. The Indians, alarmed for the safety of the cherished hunting ground, formed a strong coalition to protect themselves and banish the invader; a little more than a half century later, this same unenviable position of "Middle Ground" was the theater of combat. This encounter was no less bloody and no less savage than that contended by the aborigines. The Unionists and Secessionist sympathizers coalesced in order to preserve the "Dark and Bloody Ground" from a fratricidal strife.

Daniel Boone, the greatest specimen of pioneer life that our western annals recall,<sup>3</sup> and followers stamped

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2. E. M. Coulter, Civil War And Readjustment In Kentucky, University of North Carolina Press, (Chapel Hill, N. C. 1926), 1

3. R. M. McElroy, Kentucky In The Nation's History, Moffat, Yard and Company, (New York, 1909), 33

the colony with habits of independent thinking and self-dependency that were never entirely obliterated. Kentucky's "distinctiveness" dates from this period. Fearless, intrepid, fore-sighted, individualistic, self-dependent are the traits that have been commonly accepted as Kentucky's "distinctiveness." Of no other people perhaps, can it be more truly stated that

Rivers, mountains, and plains, fertile soil and poor, racial strains and early experiences - all tend to set a people apart and stamp them with an individuality. <sup>4</sup>

The Kentucky settlements were separated from the frontier of civilization in Virginia by a wide zone of wilderness; Louisville at the Falls of the Ohio is the only city on a large river. The early settlers avoided the larger streams, "choosing the smaller affluents and rich undulating country between." <sup>5</sup> The home-making motive is seen here, and is a favorable contrast to the gold-greed and trade-craze of their neighbors, - the French and Spanish settlements and their more distant neighbors, the northern settle-

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4. Coulter, 1

5. E. C. Semple, American History and Its Geographic Conditions, Houghton Mifflin Company, (New York, 1903), 72



ments. The early Kentuckian, however, was not only a home-builder but was also a state-builder. From the exigencies of this isolation, the colony became rapidly differentiated from the parent-state, Virginia, and after the many bloodless battles fought with self-reliance and alone, a long-desired statehood was won.

A good parallel has been drawn between this separatist struggle of 1784 - 1790, and that of the secession movement in 1860 - 1861. There is a remarkable likeness, since in both cases, Shaler asserts, the majority of the leaders were for extreme measures and thought the masses were for them; the latter in both cases would not be hurried in their political decisions. Discernment and sagacity have ever characterized the body-politic, and from what may be called a rather singular political conservatism, Kentuckians were twice saved from danger. In the first decision more credit was deserved than in the second; in the first, the separation was from a government that "hardly existed, and against which many valid objections could be brought," with no violation of pledges.<sup>6</sup>

The New England States bitterly opposed the admission of Kentucky to the Union, and from that time until the Reconstruction Period the offense was not forgotten among the extremists of Kentucky. Massachusetts, especially, was disliked, because of the answer made the young Commonwealth at her invitation to concur with the Resolutions of 1798, and also for the anti-slavery propaganda originating in that section.<sup>7</sup>

The first twenty years of the history of the state of Kentucky brought about a considerable increase of the English population in the interior of the continent. If Kentucky had waited for Virginia or the Federal Government to take care of the Indian situation, there is little doubt but the growth in population would have been retarded. Keeping in mind the hardy, strong-mindedness that made for solidity of character, it is not difficult to explain the state's success in surmounting the legislative obstacles put in her path by Virginia. Shaler asserts that

... This spontaneous, unaided movement

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7. The Kentucky Resolutions of 1798 were made by the state legislature as a result of the Alien and Sedition laws, recent enactments of Congress. Kentucky held that such acts were a violation of the Constitution, and called on the states for cooperation in preventing their execution.

of people into Kentucky, and their swift organization of a State under such appalling difficulties, must always remain as one of the most surprising achievements of the English race. 8

It has been truly said that Kentucky was born into the American Revolution and cradled or nurtured in the Indian Wars; her experiences could not be more pathetically expressed than in these words:

If any community of people have lived, since the dispersion of the plains of Shinar, to this day, who were literally cradled in war, it is to be found in the state of Kentucky. The Indians' path of incursion in the West was moistened with Kentucky blood - our battlefields are white with Kentucky bones. 9

In the light of such evidence, is it not incredible that the "Savior of the West" for over half a century was little noticed by most writers of Revolutionary history? Historians claim that George Rogers Clark saved the settlements in Kentucky; his exploit also gave us probable title to the Northwest Territory. To win the enemy's territory,

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8. Shaler, 120

9. W. E. Connelly, and E. M. Coulter, History of Kentucky, I, American Historical Society, (New York, 1922), 296

his objective included Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin. Great Britain was not able to finance this expensive western war, and one of the dominant reasons for an American Independence was an economic one. For the winning of the West, a large share of "the laurels should be given to a small band of dauntless pioneers, unknown and disregarded by the patriots east of the Alleghenies. The importance of our first "Great West" was such that many have maintained it was "the main object of eight years of diplomacy, and of the most bitter and dangerous political controversy in American history."

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Because of the prominent part played by Kentucky in the War of 1812, she was styled, "Savior of the West." A beginning of greater national recognition is noted from this time. In return there was also noted greater interest in the nation by the state. Having successfully met all her difficulties from without, more serious problems from within faced the young Commonwealth. From sad experience she learned the importance of the monetary system. With the understanding of the principles of exchange at-

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10. S. M. Wilson, History of Kentucky, I, The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, (Chicago, 1928), 3

tained at this time, the state was placed on a sound financial basis and remained so in all future crises, as a view of the greatest of crises, the Civil War will show.

Beginning with 1815 the trade spirit arose and the war spirit waned; the forces that had been requisitioned for war and politics now turned toward commerce; Kentucky became the main depot or supply station for all the west and northwest country. Her industrial organizations were in the lead of the neighboring states.<sup>11</sup> The moulder of Kentucky's public opinion even at this time was that immortal genius, Henry Clay. He is considered the founder of the conservative element of Kentucky, - "the party that takes the tasks of government deliberately and philosophically, that debates, before acting, and after acting, the questions of public duty as they should be considered, -<sup>12</sup> has never lost its hold upon the State."

The political questions continually brought before the Northern and Southern States and as old as the Constitution, itself were slavery and States' Rights. Fanatics of both North and South refusing to consider compro-

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11. Shaler, 174

12. Ibid., 187

mises of any kind, so completely were the opinions of an opposite section to each other, that the cries for peace from the people en masse were not heeded by the powerful political parties in power. Kentucky's stand regarding these two political questions had much to do with her as an important factor in the Civil War. When Clay began to be a power in the nation, then Kentucky also, became involved in national affairs. The perplexing difficulties that were menacing the nation challenged her individuality, her strong-mindedness, her distinction of being different. Sectionalism had not made its paths in the "Middle Ground." Kentucky was apparently sharply divided into Mountain and Bluegrass sections, but the geographical difference did not become a basis for political cleavage before the Civil War.<sup>13</sup> Kentucky's sectionalism was not of that hue which had menaced the "solid North" and the "solid South." In Kentucky the party factions were as a rule, based on personalities or on state issues.

Public opinion was in favor of slavery, but it was not in favor of slave trade, either foreign or domestic.

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13. Wilson, II, 184

Laws were passed in 1833 binding immigrants with an oath that they would not sell their slaves. The slave-trader was looked upon with contempt and aversion by each class of Kentuckians.<sup>14</sup> There were three important reasons for Kentucky's strong defense for slavery in face of her insistence with the North on the continual preservation of the Union; first, the antecedents of this people, second, the actual conditions of slavery itself, and third, also chiefly, a deep conviction that a state should be allowed to exercise each power delegated in the Federal Constitution,<sup>15</sup> unmolested by outsiders.

The opinion of Shaler regarding slavery in Kentucky is given from long personal knowledge of the inhabitants of the Commonwealth and from fair opportunities for insight into their motives. He, himself, was a son of an owner of slaves and yet he writes:

I am inclined to think that a majority of those who owned slaves in Kentucky were opposed to the institution, and would have been ready, if the way could have been found, to make a considerable sacrifice to break it up. 16

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14. Ibid., 212

15. Coulter, 7

16. N. S. Shaler, "Border State Men of the Civil War," Atlantic Monthly, LXIX (Feb., 1892), 252

Virginia's principle of primogeniture never gained a place in Kentucky; and thus the land became more evenly distributed requiring less slave labor. For the slavery of Kentucky was not an economic question but a political one. The mountain people had little use for slaves and a less use for negroes; they felt the poor negro's existence was that of a farm horse, but he was well cared for by every one, the poor white, that of the livery stable horse who was worked by everybody and cared for by none.

Slaves, as a rule, did not suffer in Kentucky; slavery was of the domestic sort, and as a proof of this it was a fact that they could have escaped very easily over the border at any time, yet it seems that comparatively few took the opportunity. Owing to conditions prevalent in Kentucky, the slave appears to have had a much better part; this fact is asserted that

... there were two sets of slaves ...  
the servants and the masters; it is  
hard to say which was the more heavily  
chained... We might also justify  
the paradox that the masters were the  
real subjugated class. 17



The interest of the landholding farmer element respecting slavery was not so exaggerated as to blind them to the evils of the institution, nor did they anticipate withdrawing from the Union should their interests be interfered with. It was the abolitionist from the outside who defeated the very cause for which they were working. Clay's doctrine was the gradual elimination of the slave element by emancipation on the soil, or by colonization. Radical measures against his tenets by abolitionists who were trying "to do right in the wrong way", no doubt, diminished the number of Kentuckians who desired to see a legal solution of the appalling difficulty.

A trenchant editor of Kentucky, the pivotal border-state, makes clear the point of view of men so situated:

We seriously believe that when the North and South meet each other face to face and eye to eye; when they take the ideas of each other's sentiments and opinions from unprejudiced sources, and not by the perverted mediums of stump speeches, partisan diatribes, buncombe resolutions... they will be prepared to fraternize most cordially, and kick parties, politicians, platforms, and schemers into the pit of Tophet. 18

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18. Louisville Journal, Aug. 14, 1860

This paper edited by George D. Prentice was pre-eminent in Kentucky and had a fame and reputation that was national. Its circulation was the largest of any paper in the entire middle section of the Union. It is said its influence equaled "40,000 men in the Union army at this time."

Thus we see the border states in general had a more advantageous opportunity to acquaint themselves regarding the distinctions the various leaders of opinion held in respect to slavery.

The decade immediately preceding the Civil War was a time of continual excitement. Political parties gradually and distinctly divided along pro-slavery and anti-slavery lines. In 1851, the first political campaign for the abolition party in Kentucky polled three per cent of the votes of the states. Cassius M. Clay was their nominee for Governor, and did much to take away the odium of the party.<sup>19</sup>

In 1860, slavery in Kentucky was on the wane and it was considered a source of serious evils to the state; it proved a deterrent to immigration and a stimulus to emigration of the yeoman class. The war ended the wrangling over the question that had agitated the state and caused endless trouble. In the election of 1860, Kentucky polled 145,000 votes; of these Lincoln received only 1,366.<sup>20</sup> If the issue had been simply one of slavery or anti-slav-

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19. Shaler, 217

20. R. H. Collins, History of Kentucky, I, Collins and Company, (Covington, Ky. 1882), 84

ery, of Breckinridge and Lincoln, there is no doubt that Breckinridge, a native Kentuckian and allied by marriage with a powerful Bluegrass family, would have received the other 144,000 votes. However, the issue was not clear-cut, there was a question of Unionism and Secession involved which reduced the Breckinridge vote. The old-time Whigs as pro-slavery as the Democrats but, traditionally nationalistic, would not join their old rivals not even under an abolition club; they sought new alignment in the garb of the Constitutional Union party.

It has been declared by many that the Kentuckians of 1860 and 1861 were the most peaceable and most Constitution-abiding Americans. Many reasons have been advanced for their attainment of this distinction, this undisputed position of importance. Some concede that it was the result of long training in the science of government, as Kentucky was singularly rich in men of decided political capacity; unlike the more Southern states whose leadership was placed in the hands of a few dominant families, Kentucky's influence diffused the dicta of leadership.<sup>21</sup>

The fact that Kentucky, alone, escaped the ill fortune of her sister States who were precipitated into the hasty rebellion may be due to a spirit of conservatism. This was acquired from sad experience in the episode of the old and new courts and the resultant financial crisis. The men who led her from these mirages of a corrupt political world had the reputation of being strongly conservative; Clay was the chief among them.

The geographic location, it is said, gave Kentuckians a better understanding of the governmental problems harassing the country, than those not placed in the current of opinions of all sections. The border-line position also placed her in danger. The economic factor, the more practical minded asserted, was her chief motive of unprecedented conservatism; not the currents of opinions so much as the currents of trade were the determinants, - the main causes making the decision for Kentucky, a Mississippi Valley trade-state. Loyalty to the "Union under the Constitution," is the big incentive most Kentuckians are wont to claim for the unique stand of neutrality assumed and unsuccessfully maintained. Though the expedient was futile, it was not thus considered at that time, but on the other hand, it was looked upon as a spontaneous compromise on the part of a people who had serious reasons to keep war

from their door. Kentuckians were not chronic belligerents in 1861, no, nor at any other time of their history.

Secession on the part of the South and coercion, on the part of the North were both unjustifiable, Kentuckians thought. The existing conditions did not warrant the existing measures used to cure them. It was a most sincere loyalty that prompted the innumerable expedients or compromises. Greater crises had been faced and met to the satisfaction of the majority, why not this one said they and the sister border-states. In speaking of this almost fanatical love of the Union, McElroy quotes from General Hodge, sometime officer in the Confederate Army, as saying:

Their loyalty was nearly akin to the religious faith which is born in childhood, which never falters during the excitement of the longest life, and which at last enables the cradle to triumph over the grave... The Union was apotheosized. 22

Had Kentucky been consulted there would have been no secession and no coercion. But for the sense of devotion to the Federal Government, - the Union, and for the State

constitution and government, the excitement of the times and the intense pro-slavery sympathies surrounding her on all sides, there is no doubt like her "erring brethren", Kentucky would have been caught up in the maelstrom of secession. The Unionists of Kentucky<sup>23</sup> repeatedly based their opposition to secession upon the saying which became proverbial in 1860 and 1861, that "secession is a remedy for no evil, but an aggravation of all."<sup>23</sup> It appears that the principle of States Rights facilitated the activities of the secession element in the Kentucky Commonwealth, and disposed that party to be carried away at least partially from its allegiance to the Union during the slavery agitation; it was not the main cause but the contributing one. Sectional agitation and sectional bitterness fomented by a sectional party may be accountable for the "irrepressible conflict."

The basic reason for Kentucky's neutrality, then, was a desire for a peaceful perpetuation of the Union. When that goal could not be attained, then her loyalty to the Commonwealth was apparent. Throughout the history of each

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23. Captain Thomas Speed, The Union Cause in Kentucky, G. P. Putnam's Sons, (New York, 1907), 21

American Commonwealth, there is seen a diversity of loyalty. In some the nationalistic tendency is prevalent because their geographic positions have given them slight local history. In others loyalty to the Commonwealth is stronger because the population is homogeneous and circumstances have effected a large sphere of action. Of the latter type, was Kentucky. When the Federal Union would not listen to peace measures, then the next step was to save their own state from impending ruin. Neutrality was the result.

In the greatest political upheaval in the history of the country, Kentucky, the belligerent, Kentucky, the independent, Kentucky, the different sister, was the only state who resolved to debate the principle of States Rights and keep her action within the limits of her constitutional provisions. Deliberate thought, sense of duty to the State laws resulted in keeping the State in the Union. <sup>24</sup>

Thus in the forces, movements, conditions, and events may be seen the evolving situations that determined and culminated in the status quo of Kentucky in 1860 and 1861.

## CHAPTER II

### A GEOGRAPHICAL APPRAISAL OF KENTUCKY

Kentucky's geographic location, and the variety of geographic conditions, namely, the climate, soil, and natural resources are the determinants, the differentiating factors in her Civil War history. Her relative importance in that war has its final basis in geographical conditions. The dominant, fundamental factors were:

The Physical Outline --- An Extensive Borderline From East to West

The Mountain System --- The Gaps

The River Systems --- The Mississippi and Ohio

The area of Kentucky is greatly extended on an east and west line, measuring about five hundred miles in length. It occupies a central position in the union of States and owing to the difference in the altitude, slope, soils, minerals, and general surface variations, it may be divided into several natural geographical divisions.

The rugged Appalachian Mountains on the east, underlain with rich coal fields; the level tableland with rich bluegrass soil; the picturesque Knobs and the western part with the rich alluvial plains produce a beautiful and va-



ried geographical aspect.

From the apex of the Cumberland Mountains on the east and south-east begins the source of the tributary rivers of the state which flow into the Ohio River, the northern boundary and then into the Mississippi River on the south-west. The extent of Kentucky's river front is well described by Nathaniel Shaler, Kentucky's eminent geologist and historian:

The Big Sandy, the Licking, the Kentucky, the Salt, the Green, the Trade-water, the Cumberland, and the Tennessee give a greater frontage on wholly or partly navigable rivers than is found in any other State of the Union. The total length of streams that have been more or less used for navigation exceeds two thousand five hundred miles. These streams are rarely interrupted by falls or impassable rapids. 1

Thus Kentucky, a single mountain valley, lies between the two westernmost ridges of the Allegheny System, which are broken by two gaps, one Cumberland Gap, on the east of the range and Pine Gap on the west of it. The State of Tennessee forms at least four-fifths of the southern bor-

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1. Shaler, 25

der-line, with Virginia on the south-east and Missouri on the south-west. Kentucky was a border state with all that a border position implies; during the great conflict she tended to become a part of both north and south because of the place bequeathed her by geography. One Kentuckian described this central position thus:

Right here, in the very center of the Mississippi Valley, lying like a crouching lion, stretched east and west, is Kentucky, the thoroughfare of the continent. 2

The geographic segment cut deeply and surely into the southern border-line. Kentucky was a part of the south geographically; she was forced to look southward through the course of the Mississippi River. The first route to Kentucky through the Cumberland Gap served Virginia and the other Southern states. By 1860 Kentucky was not only basically Southern in population but pointed to her Virginia origin with pride. Alliances were also contracted through marriage and friendship, thus effecting a predominant racial coalition. <sup>3</sup> The importance of Kentucky's southern

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2. Cincinnati Commercial, Dec. 1, 1870

3. Connelly and Coulter, II, 792

border-line is apparent, first of all in population.\* Kentucky has been styled a "deluxe edition" of Virginia. She was an offspring of Virginia, hence her partialities, her kinship, her sympathies, her institution, her traditions were pro-southern. Though many agencies were operating toward the alienation of these strong blood ties, the Census of 1860 shows that the majority of Kentuckians born outside the state were from her Southern Border-line; Virginia had contributed 45,000, Tennessee 34,000, North Carolina 13,600, and Maryland 4,415.<sup>4</sup> Kentucky, Southern in origin could not but look on her mother-country and the remainder of the South with the loyalty of kinship and traditions. Family sympathies and sentiments of the Civil War period tended to follow a geographical division. According to Garrett Davis:

The sympathy for the South and the inclination to secession among our people is much stronger in the south-western corner of the state than it is in any other part, and as you proceed towards the upper section of the Ohio River and our Virginia line it gradually becomes weaker, until it is almost wholly lost  
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4. U. S. Bureau of the Census. Eighth Census, Population and Agriculture, Government Printing Office, (Washington, 1866), 185
  5. Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, War of the Rebellion, ser. I, vol. 2, (Washington, 1900), 678 (Referred to hereafter as Official Records,)

Of the most pronounced geological formation in Kentucky Shaler says:

The Confederacy received the youth and strength from the richest part of the Kentucky soil. The so-called Blue Grass soil sent the greater part of its men of the richer families into the Confederate army while the Union troops, though from all parts of the State, came in greatest abundance from those who dwelt on thinner soils. 6

Captain Thomas Speed takes issue with this pronouncement of Shaler's and states that:

Such an idea is emphatically wrong ... The division of sentiment was no more marked in the Blue Grass than anywhere else ... Notwithstanding the historian Shaler's remark ....the truth....is well expressed in what Colonel Ed. Porter Thompson says about the First Kentucky Brigade (Confederate), that they represented Kentucky as a whole ... 7

Considering that Speed was not a geographer or historian, but a true and loyal Unionist, it is well to have recourse to statistics. The line along which Union and Southern sympathies divided geographically can be easily seen.

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6. Shaler, 374.

7. Speed, 158, 179.

Statistics also corroborate such sympathies, for example, twenty of the wealthiest counties of the Blue Grass Section gave 30,000 men to the South, and only 6,000 to the North. Forty other counties gave 43,000 men to the South, and only 18,000 to the North. Fayette County, the heart of the Blue Grass gave 1,558 men to the South, and only 380 to the North. Pulaski County, a decided Mountain County gave only 360 men to the South, and 1,800 to the North. <sup>8</sup> On January 5, 1863, in his speech in the United States Senate, Garrett Davis seems to verify the above statistics:

I live in what is called the Blue Grass County, and a more wealthy agricultural country does not exist anywhere. I regret to say that the heaviest defection to the Union cause is in the plains, the Blue Grass region; and the greatest devotion and fidelity to it is in our mountains and hills. <sup>9</sup>

Garrett Davis, like Speed, was a Unionist, yet he bears out the historian's statement as well as the statistics, although there may have been numerous as well as conspicuous exceptions. The following is an indication of the trend of

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8. Annual Report of the Adjutant-General, January 1, 1864, Kentucky Documents, Yeoman Office, (Frankfort, 1866), 15, 16

9. Congressional Globe, 37 cong., 3 sess., Part I, Congressional Globe Office, (Washington, 1863), 187

the Blue Grass region:

We are sorry to say that the men of this rich and beautiful region of Kentucky have not rallied as they should to the defense of the Commonwealth. 10

The mountain men early in the war looked upon the Blue Grass region as interested only in making money out of the conflict and furnishing the officers. 11

The level lands and more fertile soils as in the Blue Grass section produced decided Southern sympathies, while the thinner soil area and the mountain section were productive of Unionistic tendencies. Shaler says, however, that this geological distribution of politics was by no means peculiar to Kentucky; it was common throughout the South.<sup>12</sup> "It should not be inferred," says Coulter, "that the Blue Grass was a hot-bed of secession. It was not; but it had no heart for the war against the South and showed it abundantly."<sup>13</sup>

The influence of the geographic determinant, the mountains, has been noted particularly in the pronounced sympathies for or against the Union. It has been seen

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10. Louisville Journal, Oct. 26, 1861.

11. Cincinnati Commercial, Oct. 22, 1861.

12. Shaler, 232

13. Coulter, 123

and noted particularly many times that

The whole region of the Southern Appalachians had therefore no sympathy with the industrial system of the South; it shared, moreover, in contrast to the aristocratic social organization of the planter community, the democratic spirit characteristic of all mountain people, and likewise their conservatism, which holds to the established order. 14

The mountains declared for the Union; this type of sectionalism was general over the state and most pronounced in certain sections. Todd County is said to have furnished more troops to the Federal army in proportion to its population than any county in the Union.<sup>15</sup> The population of the mountain district of Kentucky had been drawn to a very great extent from the non-slaveholding yeomen of the Blue Ridge frontier who had moved west by the Wilderness Road.<sup>16</sup>

A geographical and topographical survey of the state as has been observed by Coulter would afford an index into sympathies of the state as a whole,<sup>17</sup> and we may infer that the geographical location was the all important factor in determining the destiny of the state in 1861, just as the

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14. Semple, 285

15. W. H. Perrin, Counties of Todd and Christian, Kentucky, Battey Publishing Company, (Chicago, 1884), 80, 108

16. Semple, 284

17. Coulter, 122

geographical line of cleavage told the natural antagonism between the lowlands and uplands, the plains and the mountains, Kentucky throughout its length from east to west was of paramount importance to the South, and because its ties of blood and of institutions bound this Commonwealth with the Southern States,<sup>18</sup> the Confederate Government felt this strategic geographical area would be added to the South.

If there was any section to which Kentucky was bound in close sympathy it was that of the Mississippi Valley. A manifest destiny of the states of the Mississippi Valley was that they should remain one and inseparable; this great river system was "a bond of union made by nature itself and the Kentuckian thought the Union should be maintained forever."<sup>19</sup>

Kentucky's northern borderline given to her by geography connected her strongly with the North. Hence her pivotal position in the Civil War can be easily seen. She was a pivotal border state with all that word implied. She was not upon the western flank like Missouri, nor was she enveloped by free territory like Maryland, with no natural

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18. Shaler, 235

19. Mary Scrugham, The Peaceable Americans of 1860-1861, Longman's, Green and Company, (New York, 1921), 108



boundary. She was central, and bounded on the North by the Ohio River for about seven hundred miles; the three States of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois were bounded south by the Ohio River and by the single State, Kentucky. This explains the great extension east to west very graphically.

The following statement from Collins gives a vivid picture of this geographic situation:

The Ohio River, was at best but a great internal canal, dividing Kentucky from Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. Thousands of people found in the states of Ohio and Indiana those occupations which provided daily sustenance, but returned at nightfall to sleep in Kentucky. 20

The geographic principle that rivers present the lines of least resistance to the incoming colonist, and afterwards lend themselves to his economic needs is no better exemplified than in Kentucky's northern borderline, the Ohio River. Due to its proximity perhaps, many of Kentucky's people have emigrated to Missouri on the extreme southwest and to the three Northern States mentioned.

As we have seen, the Southern borderline was impor-

tant because of the distribution of Virginia's population through the State, and by the general immigration of other Southern States, so we can readily understand the pulling of Kentucky's heart-strings toward the North by reason of her population attachments as indicated by the exodus of native Kentuckians northward.

The first movement of the Kentucky migration was directed to the North of the Ohio River into Indiana and Illinois. When these states were admitted into the Union and for a considerable time afterwards Kentuckians formed the bulk of their population. The first migration to Indiana and Illinois reached its peak about 1835. The movement into Missouri was of a little later development and had not reached its highest peak even in 1850. The census statistics are our best source of information. The first census in which nativity statistics are available is that of 1850. There were in Missouri, 69,694 Native Kentuckians, in Indiana 68,651, in Illinois 49,588 and in Ohio 13,829.<sup>21</sup> Such a report shows that the exodus had been directly pointed to the States of Indiana, Illinois and Mis-

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21. U. S. Bureau of the Census. Seventh Census, Compendium, Government Printing Office, (Washington, 1862), 2

souri. In 1860 according to statistical tables, Kentuckians living in these states were Missouri 100,000, Indiana 68,000, Illinois 60,000 and Ohio 15,000.<sup>22</sup> Figures speak more strongly than words that Missouri is appropriately called the daughter of Kentucky. The limitations of such statistics are that we have no certainty that the native-born Kentuckians living in any State went to that state directly from Kentucky. They may be Kentuckians once or twice removed or even several times removed.<sup>23</sup> Lincoln's family was an example of twice-removed; first to Indiana then to Illinois. It has been said of Lincoln that "though born a Kentuckian, he did not possess Kentucky eyes."

Not only were Northern population ties strengthened by emigration but also by immigration. In 1860 Kentucky numbered among her people those who had come directly from the Northern border. Ohio 14,000, Indiana 7,000, and Illinois 3,000.<sup>24</sup>

Kentucky's northern boundary-line, a river-line presented no lines of resistance but welded the people to-

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22. U. S. Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census, Population And Agriculture, (Washington, 1866), 185

23. Wilson, II, 111

24. U. S. Bureau of the Census, ibid., 185

gether. Thus there is given another evidence that

Geography knows no rigid lines of demarcation, no sharp transitions. The geographical unity of a river valley tends to be reflected in the homogeneity of its population, a homogeneity not only of constituent race elements but also of institutions and ideals. 25

The importance of this unity and homogeneity of Kentucky population of 1860 was that they were factors that weighed heavily in determining the State's decision in the impending crisis, the Civil War. Most forcibly was the strength of blood-ties expressed by Garrett Davis, a Kentucky Senator:

Why, Mr. President, Kentucky has almost peopled the northwestern states especially Indiana and Illinois. I have no doubt that one-fourth of the people of Indiana are either native-born Kentuckians or the sons and daughters of native-born Kentuckians. They are bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh ... When you offer to the Union men of Kentucky their choice whether they will remain united forever with Indiana, and Ohio and Illinois, or go with Georgia or South Carolina and Florida, they will answer 'A thousand fold will we

be united rather with the Northwest than with those distant States.' 26

The foreign population in Kentucky in 1860 was of recent accession and was due to the opening of factories on the Ohio border and to new settlements of German farmers in counties forming the northern border of the State. The number of foreign birth was 59,799. Although Louisville had the majority, there were five counties having more than a thousand each.<sup>27</sup> The yeoman element and the industrial and foreign residents on the northern border tended to balance the strong planter element in the Blue Grass,<sup>28</sup> the aristocracy of the state.

It has been claimed that when the great issue faced Kentuckians, they like all the other states followed no single geographical line, and that nothing showed the line of demarcation of sentiment better than the division of opinion of members of the same family. Examples are given of the most prominent families of the State, i.e., the Clays, the Crittendens and the Breckenridges. Of Henry

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26. Congressional Globe, 37 cong., 2 sess., Part I (1861-1862), 425 Garrett Davis, "Speech in the U.S. Senate."

27. U. S. Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census, Population, (Washington, 1860), 183-185

28. Semple, 285

Clay's grandchildren, four were Confederate and three Union soldiers; Thomas L. Crittenden's autograph is appended U.S.A. and his brother's C.S.A.

Of the hour which had come "when brother shall rise against brother," Collins claims that topographical position or peculiarity of property did not seem to influence the division. Planters turned their backs upon their plantations to join the ranks of the Federal army, while from the Northern Border, men who had never owned a slave rode away into the Southern Lines. <sup>29</sup>

We read that lifelong friends parted, to go their separate ways, not with the taunt that stings but with the clasp of the hand that means a friendship, which even the most extreme differences of political faith cannot destroy. The choice was made by each man, himself. <sup>30</sup>

To all such claims we can only say that such divisions were not the general rule as has been shown by statistics. Population ties drew the state in both directions, but numbers seem to indicate the exactness of the geographic principle of political cleavage; Unionist and

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29. Lewis Collins, Outline History of Kentucky, I, (Covington, 1882), 342.

30. Shaler, 253

secession sympathies divided along geographical lines.

Kentucky was the most centrally located of the border states. Throughout her extensive length she presented a strategic area of paramount importance to the South and to the North. Only a native of the state and a scholarly one could so graphically describe that importance as:

Wedge<sup>d</sup> in between the Confederacy and the Union, Kentucky stretched its great length east and west from the Appalachians to the Mississippi across the very threshold of the South. Traversing its territory, the Mississippi, Tennessee, and Cumberland Rivers opened up parallel avenues for an invading army into the heart of the Confederacy, while Cumberland Gap and the great intermontane valley of east Tennessee afforded a protective highway from the borders of the Blue Grass country to northern Georgia. 31

The one defenseless line was the Ohio River along the entire northern border of the state. What wonder then that disregarding all legislative mandates, both belligerents invaded the boundaries of the state and thus brought an end to its neutrality. The territory became Union but "the flower of its manhood marched across the border into

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Tennessee to join the standard of the South. <sup>32</sup>

Thus Kentucky's strategic geographic position, her land boundaries, her water boundaries, her mountain boundaries were sufficiently important to draw the attention of both Lincoln and Davis at the very outset of the war.

The history of every war is profoundly influenced by the nature of the country where it is fought. Thus in the Civil War, with the opening of hostilities, geographical conditions directed campaigns and influenced the results of battles. "In no other war of history," says Semple, "have rivers played so prominent a part as in the Civil War. This importance is reflected in the names of the Federal armies, - "Army of the Potomac," "Army of the Tennessee," "Army of the Cumberland," etc. The great size of the territory forming the western theater of the war and the long lines of communications maintained by the invading Federals, made the western rivers more effective channels of communication than railroads which could be easily torn up by one of the brilliant raids of the Confederate Cavalry. The river routes required no watching, and the



immense superiority of the North in steamboat building  
gave it valuable equipment. <sup>33</sup>

One can readily see of how great importance to the Southern cause was the river system's part when we consider that the Mississippi, from the southern boundary of Illinois led through the Confederacy to the Gulf; the Tennessee, a little to the east opened a highway to northern Alabama, and the Cumberland into Tennessee. The obvious advance of the Federals was the parallel course of these three rivers, while the Ohio commanding the entrance to these three routes, was the natural objective of the Confederates.

It is also readily seen of how great importance was Kentucky's part with her two thousand five hundred miles of streams rarely interrupted by falls or rapids.

Several historians have made mention of this particular importance of Kentucky and Shaler claims it was absolutely necessary to the prosecution of any successful campaign in the valley of the Mississippi. <sup>34</sup> That this importance was well understood by the Confederate authori-

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33. Semple, 300, 301

34. Shaler, 275

ties is seen in their Plan of Campaign: By way of Kentucky secure the Ohio River Line, thus transfer the war to the frontier of the South, then extend the invasion to the Northern soil.

The North also saw how important Kentucky was to the accomplishment of its campaign plan. Shaler, the geologist, observes that President Lincoln had an excellent natural capacity for military affairs, when he perceived the supreme importance of that point of the Appalachian Mountains which lies about Cumberland Gap. By way of this region, the Confederate armies could easily force themselves on to Central Kentucky. There are several other roads, all passing near Cumberland Gap by which troops could make their way from Central and Eastern Tennessee.<sup>35</sup> Hence is seen the reason for the Union Plan of Campaign: Blockade the Southern ports; obtain control of the Mississippi and capture Richmond.

The geographical position of Kentucky was prominent in making possible two of these plans and her mountains played an important part. For mountains by nature lend

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35. Shaler, 286

themselves to strategy. Within their rugged ramparts the movements of armies are concealed, hence protected from unexpected attacks. The gaps open the way for swoops upon the enemy in the plain, and a rapid retreat is easily attained. Cumberland Gap and the pass formed by the Tennessee River were the two openings in the escarpment wall of the Cumberland Plateau which gave access to the valley of East Tennessee, hence were strategic points in the western operations. <sup>36</sup>

The Appalachian ranges stretching through the Confederacy to Northern Alabama divided the campaign into Eastern and Western enterprises. Both were of decisive importance. For the East, victory promised the capture of the Confederate Capitol; for the West the Confederacy would be severed and the Mississippi Valley would be opened to the Gulf. In the trans-Allegheny country, mountain passes and rivers determined the military lines, though in general unconnected with the Atlantic plain, were of the nature of a vast flank movement upon the Confederates. <sup>37</sup>

General Leonidas Polk entered Kentucky and secured the

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36. Semple, 293

37. John Fiske, The Mississippi Valley In The Civil War, Houghton Mifflin Company, (New York, 1900), 38

Mississippi by occupying the bluffs at Columbus near the Tennessee Line; he saw the importance of the town of Cairo, at the junction of the Ohio River with the Mississippi. "These bluffs," Fiske relates, "afford foothold for an army approaching from the rear, but on the other hand they are unassailable by fleets on the river. A ship's guns cannot be elevated sufficiently to inflict fatal damage on such a place, which on its part can return such a plundering fire, as is difficult for the strongest ship to endure. It was therefore by fortifying Columbus (Kentucky), the first of a line of bluffs, that the Confederates could hope to retain their hold on the Mississippi River.<sup>38</sup>

At the same time General Zollicoffer invaded the south-eastern corner of the State, establishing his lines near Cumberland Gap; through this Shenandoah Valley of the West, the Confederates could throw their invading armies over the Cumberland Mountains into Central Kentucky by minor passes, eluding the Federal forces at Cumberland Gap, threaten Frankfort and even Cincinnati, then retreat, driving their captured horses and long wagon trains of

plunder from the rich Blue Grass country, and vanish along  
the old Wilderness Road into the mountains again. <sup>39</sup>

Immediately following this simultaneous invasion of Kentucky's neutral soil by the Confederates, Grant's army moved across the Ohio and took up its position at Paducah which commanded the mouths of the Tennessee and the Cumberland.

The very element in her border situation that had caused Kentucky to adopt a policy of delay had now to be met, i.e. the danger of invasion from the North and South. This natural fear was expressed thus by Archibald Dixon:

We have a million white population resident in a state only separated by the Ohio River from Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio, with a population of five million. Through each state are numerous railroads, able to transport an army of one hundred thousand men upon every part of us. 40

Indications of hostility on the north bank of the Ohio showed that the Kentuckians' fears were well-grounded. During these precarious days, the neighbors across the river presented many difficulties for the Kentuckians and

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39. Semple, 303

40. Rebellion Records, I, 75

they in turn caused their northern friends much alarm. The elders had suffered innumerable hardships to give homes and happiness in abundance to those very children and grandchildren whose efforts were now being made to subjugate their relations. Thus the Civil strife rent firesides that had known only peace and comfort.

Some measure of redress was made to Kentucky by a proclamation of Albert Sydney Johnson in which he gave explanation of the position of the Confederacy. The invasion of Kentucky had been in self-defense and that it was not his intention to dictate to Kentucky if they still wanted strict neutrality. However, if they intended to join the Federals and declare war they should not censure him for meeting <sup>41</sup> "that war whenever and wherever it may be waged."

The fall of Forts Henry and Donelson soon followed the loss of Cairo; the defeat of the Confederates at Mill Spring on the upper Cumberland in the southeast of the state had for its prize the strategic point of Cumberland Gap. It compelled the evacuation of Nashville by the Confederates,

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41. Official Records, ser. I., Vol. 4, 420, 421

the abandonment of the Cumberland line and the falling back to their second line much farther South along the bend of the Tennessee. In fine, the theater of the war was changed from the North to the South.

The panic along the banks of the Ohio, upon General Bragg's campaign and his approach in the summer of 1862, may serve to remind us how unpleasant it would have been for the North had the area and the forces of Kentucky been added to the Confederacy. "The failure of Bragg's campaign," says Shaler, removed the seat of all grand movements of the war from Kentucky ....<sup>42</sup> but Kentucky's soil was often invaded by the dashing cavalry raids and destructive guerilla encounters.

Kentucky's importance was not in the number of battles fought, or the nature of those battles, but in her strategic geographical position as seen in the short sketch of the campaigns of both belligerents. "Kentucky," as Coulter has so pertinently said, "although a border or fringe that might be thought of as joined to either section, ....<sup>43</sup> was the heart of the Union...." She was neither wholly

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42. Shaler, 331

43. Coulter, 13

Northern nor wholly Southern, but a border-state Commonwealth, forming within herself a great zone of conflicting elements and tending to become a part of the North and a part of the South.<sup>44</sup>

The importance of Kentucky in the Civil War was the result of many factors. Due to her geographical position, there were many forces, many movements pulling her first one way and then another, so that it cannot be said that any one factor was a deciding issue resulting in her importance. Each exerted its own influence and the final outcome was distinctive. In attaining this distinction, however, we are reminded of the truism that civilization is at bottom an economic fact, at the top an ethical fact, but in the final conclusion, the basic facts are physical; for any country the physical are the geographic factors.

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44. Ibid., 42



## CHAPTER III

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### ECONOMIC FACTORS PECULIAR TO KENTUCKY

In the consideration of the physical factors that contributed to Kentucky's importance in the Civil War, it was seen by the military campaigns that both Davis and Lincoln were untiring in their efforts to secure the control of their natal state. Was it the bulk of land, they saw extending from Virginia to the Mississippi, or the periphery of the state, fifteen hundred miles in length? Was it her river-system alone that attracted their attention or her mountain passes alone? Undoubtedly, both were desirable. But they also saw Kentucky's forty thousand square miles lying across the path of trade from north to south. Commerce was the magnet drawing with irresistible force the attention of the North and the solicitude of the South.

It has been said that the most delicate barometer for detecting and measuring conditions, is commerce with its financial background;<sup>1</sup> particularly was this true of Ken-

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1. Coulter, 239

tucky in the period of her history immediately preceding and during the Civil War. Owing to her geographic position, Kentucky was in the current of trade movements, and some historians assert that her position of neutrality was mainly an economic one. Usually political affiliations follow material interests, and economic resources derived from trade appear to have brought much pressure on the question.<sup>2</sup>

The Mississippi and its tributaries had always been the dominant trade arteries of the State, and though canals and railroads had diminished this status to some extent, yet the whole situation demanded subtlety and consummate diplomacy on the part of both belligerents in formulating general trade regulations.

In view of the fact that Kentucky's long geographic line stretched across the path of trade from north to south, commercial conflicts could be expected. Another factor that conditioned the trade relations in no small degree was the equally divided sympathies of the population. That both Kentucky's sons understood thoroughly their mother-

state's composite problem was evidenced from the very first days of the crisis, and it was at this time from January to August 1861, that Davis and Lincoln adopted general trade policies for the border states which affected Kentucky, the chief of them, because of her geographic position. The Confederate policy may be summarized in statements of the laws passed:

February 25, 1861 - Free navigation of the Mississippi to all vessels of any state bordering upon its navigable tributaries. 3

May 21, 1861 - No cotton or cotton yarns should be shipped from the Confederacy to the North. 4

August 2, 1861 - Embargo extended to include tobacco, sugar, rice, molasses, syrup and naval stores. 5

The ulterior motives of the South were obvious; undoubtedly historians say, "a bid for the border states." This was concluded from the feverish activities following, i.e. the provision for custom officers, the formulation of rules for their appointment, plans for ports of entry and

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3. Official Records, Series IV, Vol. I, 3

4. Ibid., 341, 342

5. Ibid., 529

custom houses in operation at an early date. President Davis' message to Congress was also of undoubted significance. He stipulated that

Free transit has been secured for vessels and merchandise passing through the Confederate States, and delay and inconvenience have been avoided as far as possible, in organizing the revenue service for the various railways entering into our territory. 6 \*

It is impossible to state the amount of provisions that reached the Confederacy through Kentucky. She was truly then as now the "Gateway of the South." All the western states, through Kentucky neutrality, assisted the rebels by furnishing provisions. 7 We are not surprised at such reports that Tennessee alone had secured wheat and flour enough to feed the state troops for a year, or that 1,200,000 pairs of shoes had gone South, or that the meat products represented by 3,000,000 hogs had been shipped to the rebels before Kentucky had abandoned the position of neutrality. 8

The South was being amply stocked and from the re-

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6. J. D. Richardson, A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Confederacy, United States Publishing Company, (Nashville, 1905), I, 77

7. The Crisis, November 7, 1861

8. E. A. Pollard, The Lost Cause, Treat and Company, (New York, 1867), 48

cords available, it is plainly seen that Louisville was the filling station. A graphic description of the greatest single economic movement and of the collecting and distributing center, Louisville, in the spring and summer of 1861, as a result of the free trade in the Mississippi Valley is given by an eye-witness:

Day and night for weeks past, every avenue of approach to the depot has been blockaded with vehicles waiting to discharge their loads, while almost fabulous prices have been paid for hauling, and the road has taxed itself to its utmost capacity to carry through the enormous quantities of freight delivered to it. 9

Louisville's prepossession for Southern trade cannot be more accurately attested than from the freight accounts of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. The amount of freight forwarded to the South was \$252,000, and the amount received from the South was \$51,000. These figures are for the year ending June, 1861. 10

Not only did Louisville show her important economic connection with the South by her land artery of trade, but

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9. Cincinnati Gazette, June 15, 1861

10. Annual Report of the President and Directors of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad Company, Hanna and Company, (Louisville, 1861), 21

her waterways also, were such that could not be justly condemned for economic inadequacy. The business of forwarding the river commerce absorbed much capital and energy of the larger Ohio River cities. This was particularly true of Louisville. Situated at the natural obstruction made by the falls to continuous navigation, she became the natural port of the upper Ohio, and the head of navigation for the lower streams.<sup>11</sup>

At the beginning of the Civil War, when inland navigation was extended owing to the canals and improved facilities of the steamboat, the export trade of the Mississippi Valley was no longer a river traffic to New Orleans, but a steam-boat intra-valley trade, which rapidly developed and filled in all gaps in river traffic made by the changing route of that trade. The commercial prosperity of Louisville, Cincinnati, Memphis, and New Orleans, Saint Louis and Nashville owed much to its intra-valley trade. Regular daily lines of steamboats left Cincinnati for Madison, Louisville, Nashville, Arkansas and New Orleans, and also there was a daily average of a half-dozen steamers

arriving at Cincinnati, thus showing an equal division of up and down river traffic. The south-bound boats carried corn, candles, whisky, apples, bacon, hay, poultry, flour, horses and mules. The up-river traffic was just as important. It included molasses, sugar, raisins, furniture, lemons, oranges, turpentine and cotton. The whole aspect of this trade was one of mutual dependence of the two sections; the existence of the commerce was much more important to the economic solidarity and the contentment of the Valley than the use of any particular route.<sup>12</sup> Thus by reason of her land and water routes, Kentucky was a veritable highway between the Confederacy and the Union. Her trade had drawn her commercially to the North and the Louisville and Nashville railroad which had just been completed led her to the heart of the Confederacy.

This enviable economic position was not to be of long standing. Louisville merchants became alarmed about the seizures of shipments of munitions destined for Tennessee and Arkansas.<sup>13</sup> Kentucky took issue with Cincinnati for interfering with commerce on the Ohio, for she based her

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12. E. M. Coulter, "Effects of Secession Upon the Commerce of the Mississippi Valley," Mississippi Historical Review; no. 3, (December 1916), 275

13. Cincinnati Commercial, April 15, 1861

claim to the Ohio on the Virginia act of cession of the Northwest Territory to the Federal Government. A friendly understanding was concluded by the Kentucky delegation and Governor Dennison's amicable letter, they were told, was the expression of the people of Ohio.<sup>14</sup> Cincinnatians, however, did not agree with their Governor; only a few days later, in a meeting of strong Unionists it was resolved

That any man or set of men in Cincinnati or elsewhere who knowingly sell or ship one ounce of flour, or pound of provisions, or any arms or articles which are contraband of war, to any person or any state, which was not declared its firm determination to sustain the Government in the present crisis, is a traitor and deserves the doom of a traitor. 15

Home Guards were organized in Cincinnati and their chief duty was to suppress all contraband trade with the South. They were diligent in watching steamboats, searching depots, and ordering suspicious bales and boxes back to warehouses. The Governor, too, abandoned his conciliatory attitude toward Kentucky by forbidding telegraph operators to transmit orders for munitions of war by any

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14. Whitelaw Reid, Ohio in the War, Moore Wilstock and Baldwin Company, I (Cincinnati, 1868), 39, 40

15. Ibid., 40



person except the Governors of States loyal to the Union, or Officers of the United States Army or Government, or Mayors of cities in the loyal States. A week later orders were issued to all railroad presidents in Ohio, to examine all freight going toward Virginia or any other seceded States.<sup>16</sup> Soon the Legislature set up a system of espionage to examine all freight leaving the state. All orders referred primarily to arms and munitions of war, and in every instance it was found possible or was made possible to interpret them in such a way as to exclude Kentucky from participation in the trade.

Indiana caught the disease in a more malignant form. The virulence of the germ may be accounted for in such statements as the following:

... we would urge upon the citizens of New Albany and Jeffersonville, that not one dime's worth of any supplies - not even a pound of butter or a dozen of eggs - be allowed to cross the river from this side, till this species of 'neutral' raciality is at an end. 17

The Governor of Indiana informed Lincoln that in his es-

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16. Reid, I, 41, 42

17. Cincinnati Daily Gazette, Editorial, June 15, 1861

timation all commercial intercourse with Kentucky should be stopped, that Kentucky would not abandon her position of neutrality, which was all their so-called Union could hope for.<sup>18</sup> Official and individual committees were formed and blockades and trade rules issued. This storm of trade agitation between the northern and southern banks of the Ohio raged on. Illinois, which possessed the strategic point, Cairo, at the junction of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers, was the real arbiter of the interior river routes. At the beginning of the war, Governor Yates had the Illinois troops stationed there and Cairo completely cut off trade of the Ohio River cities with the South. Then it was that the Louisville and Nashville railroad superseded the Mississippi as the highway of the Confederacy; Louisville was therefore, the outlet of the Ohio Valley to the South. All efforts to prevent the mad scramble to get the trade of this section were ineffective.<sup>19</sup>

Owing to fraudulent permits allowed steamboats, all kinds of subterfuges were resorted to, hence by June 13, 1861, there was a general tightening up. The Surveyor of

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18. Official Records, Series III, Vol. I, 158

19. Ibid., Vol. XXXI, Part I, 781

the Customs announced that after June 24, no goods of any sort would be permitted to leave Louisville without a permit from his office. <sup>20</sup> Kentucky's intra-valley trade had assumed such proportions and there were such a series of trade conflicts that one trade report records

The Ohio River divides corn, North  
20 cents a bushel; corn, South side  
40 to 50 cents. The Kentucky farmers  
will get rich; the Ohio farmers poor  
under this state of things, if they  
last long. 21

What about the Federal Government in respect to the trade wrangle? Did it consider Kentucky's economic opportunity a "nefarious business" as did the neighbor-editor who said

The Neutrality of Kentucky seems to consist in perfect freedom to furnish our enemies the wherewith to make war upon us, and the Government knowingly permits this nefarious business. 22

Did Lincoln have any policy respecting Kentucky? From all evidence it appears to have been the same as that respecting Fort Sumter, i.e., provoking inactivity until the im-

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20. Collins, I, 92

21. The Crisis, June 20, 1861

22. Cincinnati Gazette, June 15, 1861

petuous South would blunder; in this case he waited until Kentucky was sufficiently alienated from the South because of embargoes on trade and other differences. When he had obtained his objective, then all exits to the South were sealed. It is thus seen that Lincoln considered the political situation in Kentucky more important than the economic one. How very important the economic one was is seen by Collins statement of the capital, circulation and loan records as follows:

<u>Capital</u>		<u>Circulation</u>
Jan. 1, 1861 ...	\$13,429,725 .....	\$10,267,202
<u>Loans</u>		
Bank of Kentucky .....		\$500,000
Northern Bank of Kentucky .....		350,000
Farmer's Bank of Kentucky .....		250,000
Bank of Louisville Kentucky .....		200,000
Commercial Bank of Kentucky .....		100,000
Bank of Ashland Kentucky .....		35,000
Balance previous loan .....		57,559
		<hr/>
		\$1,492,559
		23

The South by its commercial policy had looked for quick results and secured them when Southern products were cut

off from the North; the North worked for ultimate ends and won the larger stake for which she played so craftily. Besides the deep political significance, of what value was this trade between the two sections? No better evidence of its importance is presented than Kentucky's coffers which were bulging with Southern gold as we have seen by the great strength of the banks. That gold was used ultimately for the Union Cause. The financial management of the state was of a superior nature. At no time during the war had its bonds defaulted in interest or principal. The banks were even declaring small dividends,<sup>24</sup> and when the Federal Banks and many of the eastern banks were suspending specie payments,<sup>25</sup> Kentucky banks refused to do so. The State was not sorely pressed for money at any time during the war; the banks took the loans which were issued by the Commonwealth at their face value, with the confidence that the state would not be imperilled by the existing general chaos.<sup>26</sup> The state tax rate during the war was forty cents per hundred dollars of assessed value. For military purposes it spent more than \$3,500,000.<sup>27</sup> Kentucky's place

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24. Collins, I, 98

25. Ibid., 93

26. Shaler, 389

27. Hunt's Merchant Magazine, LIV, 346, 347

in the financial world of 1860 was very near first.  
The Eighth Census Report, 1860, shows her relative importance financially.

Eighth Census, 1860

STATES	No. of banks & branches	Capital	Loans	Specie	Circulation	Deposits
Illinois	74	\$ 5,251,225	\$ 387,229	\$ 223,812	\$ 8,981,723	\$ 10,037
Indiana	97	4,343,210	7,675,861	1,583,140	5,390,246	1,701,479
Kentucky	45	12,835,670	25,284,869	4,502,250	13,520,207	5,821,892
Maryland	31	12,568,962	20,898,762	2,779,418	4,106,869	1,114,180
Missouri	38	9,082,951	15,461,192	4,160,912	7,884,885	1,571,176
New Hampshire	52	5,016,000	8,591,688	255,278	3,271,183	1,117,991
New Jersey	49	7,884,412	14,909,174	940,700	4,811,832	1,711,465
Ohio	52	6,890,839	11,100,362	1,828,640	7,983,889	1,401,614
Tennessee	34	8,067,037	11,751,019	2,267,710	5,538,378	1,114,799

Figures speak more convincingly than words, and particularly so, when they are symbols of monetary values. Of these states, Kentucky held first place financially. Kentucky with less than half as many banks as Indiana had almost three times as much capital. Ohio had a few more banks than Kentucky and about half the capital.

Kentucky's primal wealth was in her soil; 10,000 square miles of as fertile land as could be found in the United States, the celebrated Blue Grass Region, is claimed by the State geologist, Shaler, to be equal in fertility to the best English, Belgian, or Lombardian lands, and that it is doubtful that it could be equalled by any other state of the Mississippi Valley.<sup>29</sup> The soils were too diverse for the cultivation of a single staple crop, and owing to the variety of agricultural wealth in 1860, Kentucky held a dominating position in the Southern States. The following table gives an idea of the diversity of products and the relative production as compared with other states. Kentucky, relying mainly on the soil for her support was better able to withstand the shock of war than those states depend-

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29. Shaler, 30

ing principally on manufacturing industries.

	1850	1860
Wheat	Ninth	Ninth
Maize	First	Second
Rye		Fifth
Tobacco	Second	Second
Flax	First	Third
Hemp	First	First
Swine	Second	Fourth
Mules	Second	Second
Horses	Sixth	Sixth
Value of home (or household manufactures)		Second

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Large armies were provisioned from Kentucky's stores; Richmond and Lexington were Federal army bases at which immense stores were held. They were captured by Bragg, who is recorded as having carried off one million dollars worth of stores and arms, ninety thousands dollars worth of pork and twenty thousand men supplied with arms. Two and one half days were required for his wagon trains to pass a given point. It was said that Lexington afforded the rebels



the richest harvest they had reaped during the war. <sup>31</sup> The armies on her soil had to be fed and clothed and the surplus produce, live stock and manufactures were requisitioned for both contending armies.

At the beginning of the war, Kentucky was occupied by the Confederate forces in four places at one time and even after Federal troops had left the state, Grant's armies in Arkansas, Tennessee and Mississippi were furnished with 200 head of cattle daily, and a contract for 100,000 hogs was filled. <sup>32</sup> Pork packing was stimulated by the army demands and although the great "Hog Swindle" almost disrupted the gigantic business, contracts were soon filled; at the Louisville market, a thousand hogs were slaughtered daily. <sup>33</sup> Demands for horses and mules were constantly made by purchasing agents sent out by the Federal Government; one contract alone was for 2,000 mules. The Louisville Journal stated that

Hundreds of drovers are daily driving  
off our horses and cattle and hogs and  
almost interminable trains of wagons

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31. Cincinnati Commercial, Nov. 7, 1862

32. Collins, I, 145

33. Cincinnati Commercial, Dec. 5, 1861

are hauling away our bacon and pork  
and all kinds of breadstuff ... 34

Complaints were made about the voracious appetites of the  
armies and fear was expressed that the

Genius of starvation that has been  
stalking grimly among rebel armies  
and rebel citizens, may haunt our  
own homes. 35

The report of the 3,000 hogsheads of tobacco sent to Nash-  
ville shows that if the soldier must have his pork, he must  
also have his smoke. Tobacco was the most valuable crop;  
in 1864 the prices were \$1.50 to \$2.00 a pound. The acre-  
age in corn was greater than for tobacco, and the whisky  
business prospered when it was not deprived of grain be-  
cause of the large government contracts; during three months  
four counties exported over 213,000 gallons.<sup>36</sup> The same  
year wine in one county alone was made, to the amount of  
31,000 gallons.

Many attempts were made to make money by persons mas-  
querading under the authority of the government at the ex-

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34. Louisville Journal, Oct. 4, 1862

35. Ibid., Oct. 4, 1862

36. Collins, I, 129

pense of the farmers. The corn trade was interfered with; the distillers of the Blue Grass counties in 1864 were ordered to discontinue the distillation of corn; in 1863, all corn supplies were turned over to the use of the army. At this, however, the general feeling was that "the army must be fed, even if the home drinkers are put on short allowances in their drinks." <sup>37</sup>

Kentucky was to feel the disorganization and economic destruction of war; in supplying the armies of the West and the army of occupation, she suffered the loss of much property. The state was raided for food and horses. It became a common practice of marauders to take any horses they were able to find and so general was the oppression occasioned that "Loaded country wagons," it is said, "with produce for market are left in the road; milk carts, drays, and butchers' wagons are left in the streets, their horses seized." <sup>38</sup> The decrease in livestock was greater in Kentucky than in any other State; <sup>39</sup> there was a drop from 388,000 in 1861 to 299,000 in 1865, in horses and mares; from 95,000 to 58,000 mules; from 692,000 to 520,000 cattle. <sup>40</sup> Secretary Stanton

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37. Tri-Weekly Commonwealth, Nov. 6, 1863

38. Official Records, ser. I, vol. 45, part 2, 139

39. Cincinnati Gazette, January 4, 1865

40. American Annual Cyclopaedia and Register of Important Events, D. Appleton and Co., (New York, 1874), 459

had ordered General Thomas to seize horses and other species of property needed for military service,<sup>41</sup> so it is an expected record we read in the account of tolls paid by a border-state. The seizures by both armies and by raiders and guerillas were greater than the "other states because of the five major raids of John Morgan. This arch-raider has few parallels in history.

When Buckner occupied Louisville in the very beginning of the war, on his way southward, he burned bridges, seized locomotives and cars, estimated by the railway company at about a quarter of a million dollars.<sup>42</sup> In the campaign against river locks, the Kentucky and Green Rivers suffered most. Legitimate destructions were increased by lawless devastations of guerilla bands. Kentucky became again the happy hunting-ground of savage cut-throats and plunderers; many towns were fired on and courthouses were burned.<sup>43</sup>

Complaints were continually made against the Federal Government for failure in paying the claims of the citizens of the state against it. The Governor in his message to the Legislature gave an account of the failures to make

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41. Official Records, ser. I, vol. 45, part 2, 18

42. Annual Report of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, 1860-1861, 75, 79

43. Collins, I, 108

collections on the vouchers left by the army.<sup>44</sup> Ohio and Indiana were paid for the damage done by Morgan's raids, and had not a vigorous protest been made by the Commonwealth, its claims would not have been recognized. There was set up in Washington a claim-agency for the sole purpose of requiring the Federal Government to pay its debts. At the end of the War, the amount due Kentucky was the enormous sum of \$1,500,000.<sup>45</sup> Shaler states that the Federal Government slowly repaid the three millions which had been advanced by the state for war purposes.<sup>46</sup> Kentucky was as loyal as any state in the Union, but owing to her position geographically, she was considered even by the Federal Government Officials as a part of the Confederacy. This impression was chiefly due to reports made to Washington by General Sherman. He claimed that the young men of Kentucky had generally joined the Confederacy and that the Union men were conservative and would not fight their Southern kindred. Sherman saw in almost every Kentuckian, a spy for the Confederates. In his disappointment at the slowness of the organization of troops, he said,

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44. Louisville Journal, Dec. 19, 1862

45. American Annual Cyclopaedia, op. cit., 459

46. Shaler, 388

Our enemies have a terrible advantage in the fact that in our midst, in our camps, and along our avenues of travel they have active partisans, farmers and business men, who seemingly pursue their usual calling, but are, in fact, spies. 47

To this gloomy picture of affairs in Kentucky, Shaler asserts in no measured terms that Kentucky's quota of troops was always full, and though forty thousand men did go into the rebellion, she raised all the men that fell to her lot almost without bounties, and practically without a draft, a record not exceeded, if equaled, by any state of the Union. 48

The following statistics may prove convincing to many who have the impression that Kentucky furnished comparatively few troops to the Union army. The quota for Kentucky showing the aggregate number of men furnished under all calls, compares favorably with other states. Loyalty in terms of regimental rosters could be more accurately measured, were the number of inhabitants of each state enrolled. The exact situation could have been seen, also, had the number of male inhabitants subject to draft been

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47. Official Records, ser. I, vol. 4, 340

48. Shaler, 269

listed. The following table needs no explanation:

Maine .....	71,745
New Hampshire .....	34,605
Vermont .....	35,246
Rhode Island .....	23,711
Connecticut .....	57,270
New Jersey .....	79,511
Delaware .....	13,651
Maryland .....	49,731
West Virginia .....	32,003
Michigan .....	90,119
Wisconsin .....	96,118
Minnesota .....	25,034
Iowa .....	75,860
Kansas .....	20,097
Kentucky .....	78,540

49

Kentucky has the distinction of being the "only state in the Union that furnished more than her quota of troops without a draft."<sup>50</sup> It is reported that at one time a draft was started, but when one of her members of congress, Garrett Davis, was informed that the state had then furnished more than its quota, the draft was not made. In the rosters of the various states is seen that Kentucky furnished more troops than many others in which a draft had to be called; among them were "Connecticut, Iowa, Kansas, Minne-

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49. Annual Report Adjutant-General, 1865-1866  
Kentucky Documents, Washington Printing Office, (Washington, 1866), 15

50. A. C. Quisenberry, "Kentucky Union Troops in the Civil War," Kentucky State Historical Society, XVIII, (Frankfort, 1920), January, December

sota, Maine, Michigan, New Hampshire and New Jersey." The number of slaves in Kentucky enlisting in the Union Army can be estimated only approximately, since they were enrolled as "United States Colored Troops," they were not accredited to Kentucky. There were "about 25,000 according to several estimates of historians.

The state raised and maintained at its own expense 20,000 State troops and militia, of whom Collins says "are admirably drilled in rifle tactics, handsomely uniformed, and fully armed and equipped."

52

When Kentucky abandoned neutrality in September, 1861, the Federal Government expected the state to smite the South as relentlessly as any radical abolitionist of Massachusetts, but in this, as in political matters, Lincoln soon saw that Kentucky would have to be handled with care, caution and tact. Officers placed in command were Kentuckians, even care was taken to make purchases in Kentucky and to make payments immediately. Union sentiment could not be trifled with at this time. By December 1861, however, twenty thousand troops for special defense were

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51. Ibid., 137

52. Collins, I, 86



raised, and by the end of the year, 29,203 Kentuckians had a proud record of active service before they were actually mustered into service. <sup>53</sup>

A great shock dealt the Kentucky people at this most crucial time was the proclamation of General Fremont confiscating the property of non-Federal sympathizers in Missouri, and liberating their slaves. The Kentucky Yeoman declared that

If the monstrous outrages proposed in Fremont's proclamation be submitted to, then the people may make up their minds to submit to the utter destruction of every civil right. <sup>54</sup>

Lincoln saved the day by setting aside the objectionable features, telling the obdurate Fremont, they would perhaps ruin the Union's fair prospects for Kentucky. He knew that "The Kentucky legislature would not budge till that proclamation was modified." <sup>55</sup>

Under circumstances far more trying than any endured by any other state of the Union, Kentucky met the requisitions for troops to carry on the war and according to Sha-

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53. Speed, 143

54. Kentucky Yeoman, September 2, 1861

55. J. B. Nicolay, and J. A. Hay, Complete Works of Lincoln, Century Publishing Co., VI, (New York, 1890), 357

ler, "with a promptness and loyalty unsurpassed by any of the states."<sup>56</sup>

Great numbers of Kentucky troops served within the state; from the very beginning they were employed in checking the advance marches of the Confederates. The protection of the railroad connections was most important, since the long trains of freight cars were always heavily laden with provisions, munitions of war and soldiers. "To defend and protect these lines," says Speed, who, himself was an officer, "no troops were so well adapted as those who were familiar with the State."<sup>57</sup> General D. W. Lindsey was given the position of organizing troops to protect the various lines of communication because of his knowledge of the situation; of such importance did Sherman consider Kentucky's land trade-arteries.

In defending their own State, the troops were defending the nation, for had Louisville been taken, or had the State cast her lot with the South, her soldiers pushing with the rebel armies to the Northern Border and then on to Ohio, Indiana and Illinois soil, the value of Kentucky's

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56. Shaler, 349

57. Speed, 292

troops would have been estimated in very different figures.

The physical status of the soldiery is very important, and the superiority of Kentucky's manhood is well-known; it can be attested in no more telling manner than by a table of measurements compiled from the report of the Sanitary Commission, made from measurements of the United States Volunteers during the Civil War. The average height is almost an inch greater than the New England troops; the girth of chest and the circumference of head are larger; they equal in size the picked northern armies of Europe. Shaler says that were the thirty or forty thousand men who went into the Confederate Army included, it would have been probable that the averages given in the table would have been much greater. Even without this consideration the measurement of the fifty thousand troops is unusual and had this call to arms not been a levy en masse, the results no doubt would have been more unusual. <sup>58</sup> Kentucky gave brawn and brain of no mean proportions to the Union cause. Though the idea of "Kentucky giant" has been somewhat overdrawn by many Kentucky did excel in physical proportions.

A Table of Measurements of American White Men compiled from Report of the Sanitary Commission, made from Measurements of the United States Volunteers during the Civil War.  
By... B. A. Gould

Nativity	Mean Height		Mean weight in pounds	Mean circumference, chest		Mean circumference around forehead and occiput.	Proportion of tall men in each 100,000
	No. of men	Height in inches		Full inspiration inches	After each inspiration		
New England	152,370	67.834	139.39	36.71	34.11	22.02	295
N.Y., N.J., Penn.	273,026	67.529	140.83	37.06	34.38	22.10	237
Ohio, Indiana	220,796	68.169	145.37	37.53	34.95	22.11	486
Mich., Mo., Ill.	71,196	67.822	141.78	37.29	34.04	22.19	466
Seaboard Slave States	.....	.....	140.99	36.63	34.23	21.93	600
Kentucky, Tenn.	50,334	68.605	139.85	37.83	35.30	22.32	848
Free States West of Miss. R.	3,811	67.419	.....	37.53	34.84	21.97	184
British Maritime Provinces	6,320	67.510	143.59	37.12	34.81	22.13	237
Canada	31,698	67.086	141.35	37.14	34.35	22.11	177
England	30,037	66.741	137.71	36.91	34.30	22.16	103
Scotland	7,313	67.258	137.85	37.57	34.69	22.23	178
Ireland	83,128	66.951	139.18	37.54	35.27	.....	84
Germany	89,021	66.660	140.37	37.20	34.74	22.09	106
Scandinavia	6,782	67.337	148.14	39.39	35.37	22.37	221

59. Shaler, 373

The measurements of troops from Tennessee and from Kentucky are listed together. But as those from Kentucky were far more numerous than those from Tennessee, for the reason that the Federal recruits from Tennessee were relatively few in number, we may safely regard these tables as representing the physical condition of the Kentucky troops.

Though Kentucky's coffers were filled with Southern gold, though she was richer in grain and live-stock so necessary in war, than any other part of the South, though she was best fitted to maintain an army of any state in the Union, and though we admit that these were economic factors that made for important service, yet the most important of all was her sacrificial offering on the altar of her country, namely, the loss she sustained in the death and incapacitation of her soldiers. No more beautiful, or better, no truer tribute could be paid to Kentucky, than the official one in the form of a letter from one of her very many distinguished leaders. Since it is in the estimation of the writer, a summation of Kentucky's importance, it is appended with gratification.

Headquarters Kentucky Volunteers, +  
Adjutant-General's Office,  
Frankfort, Dec.1,1866.

To His Excellency, Thomas E. Bramlette, Governor of  
Kentucky:

It has been fashionable with some to reflect upon the loyalty of our State; but every true man must feel and cordially confess that Kentucky has, during the late war, under circumstances far more trying than those surrounding any other State in the Union, discharged her whole duty. She has at all times, and under all circumstances, promptly responded to the quotas assigned her, and not with the mercenary purchased by excessive State or local bounty, but with citizens prompted by patriot-

ism to the defense of their Government. In proof of this, the gallant record of our State, I would refer those doubting, to the casualty statistics of this report, the record of battles in which Kentucky troops have borne an honorable part, and lastly to the seventy-nine stand of colors, those silent yet eloquent souvenirs of toil and danger, now displayed in the Capitol of the State, to remain as evidence of the bravery of her sons, and as an incentive to continued patriotism and sacrifice whenever duty calls. Many of these flags have been pierced with shot and shell and their folds stained with the blood of their bearers, but all bearing evidence of the duty which Kentucky troops were expected to do and did perform. Certainly, no one will rejoice more than your Excellency in the fact that there is not a blemish upon the escutcheon of a single organization from Kentucky.

Very Respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,  
D.W.Lindsey, 60  
Adjutant General of Kentucky.

In the following table will be seen the numbers of Kentucky's sons, - her Union troops, who made the supreme sacrifice. The numbers represent more men than quotas of troops furnished by any one of the following states, Colorado, Dakota, Nebraska, Nevada, or Oregon. This count does not include the large numbers enrolled in the Confederacy.

## Deaths in Kentucky Union Troops During Civil War\*

Killed and died of wounds		Of disease and other causes		Prisoners of War died		Discharged for Disability	Aggregate Deaths, Officers and Men	Total Number Mustered	Totals
Officers	Enlisted Men	Officers	Enlisted Men	Officers	Enlisted Men				
134	2291	136	7190	3	1071	7358	10771	64190	

61

From the available sources examined it appears that in money, in men, in munitions of war, in food supplies and general supplies, Kentucky was by no means an economic delinquent. She contributed the lion's share to a war she so earnestly hoped and worked to avert. From a study of her annals one is safe in concluding that men of the highest type, money in no stinted measure, means of corporal existence in abundance, were the economic indices of her importance in the Civil War.

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61. W. H. Perrin, History of Kentucky, F. A. Battey and Co., (Chicago, 1887), 30

## CHAPTER IV

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### Political Factors Operating in Kentucky in 1860-1861

Kentucky's political importance in the Civil War period of her history evolved from the most difficult role she assumed and hoped to play to a successful conclusion. It was that of a peacemaker between her friends of the North and her friends of the South. Her reasons for thinking she might be able to effect a satisfactory solution for their sectional differences were various. The interests of Kentucky's composite life were bound to both the North and the South. As one of the northern tier of border states and the most centrally located of them, she tended to be a part of the North; as a typical border slave state with a segment cutting deep into the slaveholding South, she tended to be a part of the South.

A slave state bordering upon free states acting as a peacemaker, or an umpire between conflicting neighbors was not an anomalous role, at a time when the whole country was clamoring for peace. On the 17th of January, 1861, the Legislature of Kentucky assembled and on the 19th, Honorable R. T. Jacob of the Lower House brought the following resolution before the Assembly:



That the proper position of Kentucky is that of mediator between the sections, and that as an umpire she should remain firm and impartial in the day of trial to our beloved country, that her counsel and mediation may aid in restoring peace and harmony and brotherly love throughout the land. 1

Thus Kentucky's effort at peacemaking was an honest one made from an honest conviction that a crisis could be avoided by exercising sound judgment and peaceable measures. Her position as mediator was both logical and important. She was a slave state and not a planter state, hence not pro-Southern; she was not a free state and not an industrialist state, hence not pro-Northern; she was a typical border state untainted with the sectionalism raging north and south of her. Kentuckians felt convinced that through her able leaders, she could take an amicable position between the extremists of the North and the extremists of the South. The ultra-radicalism of the minority of both sections did not deter her. She was far enough north to understand the political leanings there. The North had not been abolitionized. On the contrary, before the firing of Fort Sum-

ber the sentiment of the North was overwhelmingly conservative. She was far enough south to be cognizant of the "rotten" and the "hidden" planks in the party platforms.

Kentucky philosophers were reasoning in about the same channels as the sages across the Atlantic who were asking one another why twenty-five million intelligent Americans could not settle the conditions of one million uneducated Africans without tearing one another's throats." <sup>2</sup> Hence these peaceable Americans, Kentuckians, whose reputation as fighters was proverbial, in 1860 attempted to ameliorate the "black precipitates" of the North and the "red precipitates" of the South. They thought the differences between the sections could be compromised; in other great crises of the country, a great Kentuckian had brought about a compromise; trained in the school of the "Great Commoner," they could bring forward his disciple, John J. Crittenden, on whom Clay's mantle had fallen. For political sagacity and rare foresight, few men surpassed Crittenden; his knowledge of the tendency of public events and the immensity of the struggle into which the nation was drifting was the re-

sult of years of study, observation and practical experience.

When on the floor of the United States Senate, December 18, 1860, he explained the resolution he had formulated, in which he hoped would bring about amity between the discontented parties, he said he had

.... endeavored by these resolutions to meet all these questions and causes of discontent by amendments to the Constitution of the United States, so that the settlement, if we can happily agree on any, may be permanent, and leave no cause for future controversy. 3

The question of acceptance or rejection of the Crittenden Compromise was the momentous one of the hour. It was of no importance respecting the actual existence of slavery where soil and climate prohibited any profit therefrom. Its significance seemed to be due to the fact that its acceptance would have put an end to the Republican Party. The radical and conservative groups of the party would have cut away had a settlement of the controversy of slavery in the territories been effected. The northern conservatives

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3. Congressional Globe, 36th Congress, Second Session, Part I, Dec. 18, 1860, 267

and in fact the majority of the northern people were in favor of the acceptance of the Crittenden proposals, for they wished neither disunion nor war. The Crittenden Compromise was a test, an acid one for the Republican Party leaders on both the slavery questions and the sectional control of the national government.

It has been declared by James Ford Rhodes that Lincoln was responsible for the rejection of the Crittenden Compromise. Other historians state the Republican leaders and politicians were more culpable, for the disunion of the Union of the States was not so serious a matter to them as the disunion of the Republican Party. One echo of such heralding was: "To compromise is to ruin the Republican Party, for it is to rend it asunder .... Let the leaders stand firm .... The vital question for the Republican Party is, 'Will Abraham Lincoln stand firm in this trying hour?' We answer, 'He will!'"<sup>4</sup> To the politician of this stripe, the Crittenden Compromise and the secession of South Carolina were schemes concocted for the destruction of the Republican Party. Toombs' message to the people of Georgia

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4. New York Tribune, Feb. 8, 1861; Scrugham 65

states that "The test has been put fairly and frankly, and it is decisive against the South."<sup>5</sup>

Ah! for the might have been! "No doubt can now exist," says Rhodes, "and but little could have existed in January, 1861, that if it, Crittenden's Compromise plan, had been submitted to the people, it would have carried the Northern States by a great majority, that it would have obtained the vote of almost every man in the border States, and that it would have received the preponderating voice of all the Cotton States but South Carolina."<sup>6</sup>

When Crittenden's plan was not submitted to the people, its rejection was an impetus to six other states to follow South Carolina. Kentucky was one of the eight remaining slave states which waited further developments. There was much muddled thinking by all parties, and many failed to distinguish the difference between "sectionalism" and "nationalism" and party domination; thus public opinion led astray by the press of the period was as varied as individual minds.

Kentucky would not be thwarted in her efforts for a

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5. Kentucky Yeoman, Dec. 27, 1860

6. J. F. Rhodes, History of the United States from the Compromise of 1856, MacMillan Co., (New York, 1899), III, 261

general peace. George D. Prentice, considered the intellectual match of any man of his day, used the columns of his paper, the Louisville Journal, pointed out to the people of the state, that their duty was arduous and painful. It was to keep Kentucky on the safe and lofty path of peace. "Peace is prosperity and liberty," he said, "as war is desolation and despotism."<sup>7</sup>

On January 17, 1861, Governor Magoffin in his message to the General Assembly declared his favor of the Crittenden Compromise that had been rejected, and that the people of Kentucky should be given a chance to take further steps toward peace. He wrote to the Kentucky Yeoman: "... the mere election of Lincoln is not a sufficient cause for secession or rebellion."<sup>8</sup> For Kentucky to take such a stand would be to inoculate her with a more insidious sectionalism than that which ravaged the extremists of the North and South.

The general opinion of Kentuckians was that the war was an unnatural strife, and for them it would be intestine and fratricidal. A fight between friends and brothers

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7. Louisville Journal, May 29, 1861

8. Journal of the House of Representatives of Kentucky, Appendix to the Governor's Message, Yeoman Office, (Frankfort, Ky., 1861), 12. (Referred to hereafter as House Journal.)

was looked upon with terror, and moreover, it meant a disruption of the Union to which they had pledged to be loyal when they placed the block of Kentucky marble in the Washington monument bearing the inscription, "Under the auspices of heaven and the precepts of Washington, Kentucky will be the last to give up the Union."

A sense of pride in the Union, a singular devotion to it, was the heritage bequeathed to Kentuckians by that great Nationalist of hers, - Clay. With such great mastery had this spirit of loyalty permeated their civic life, and especially in the great political parties of the State that the "Dove of Peace," which his compromise was styled, hovered still in the stormy days of 1861. "If we could accurately determine," says Shaler, "the origin of the singular deliberations that marked the Kentucky people during the Civil War, we should doubtless find that Clay's influence was of great moment in the determination of their attitude."<sup>9</sup> We cannot be surprised then, when we read again and again such like pronouncements from his under-study, Crittenden, as, the dissolution of the Union can never be regarded as

a remedy but as a consummation of the greatest evil that can befall our country.

The principles then that seemed to underlie all the activities of Kentucky during the months preceding and immediately following the firing of Fort Sumter were:

1. War is unnatural strife - in Kentucky it would be internecine and fratricidal.
2. The states have no moral<sup>\*</sup> right to secede.
3. The Federal Government has neither the Constitutional right or the power to coerce the seceded States back to the Union.
4. The Southern States should be permitted to go in peace - let them try out their experiment.
5. Kentucky, by well-timed mediation, could soon persuade the warring states to peace.
6. Kentucky must stand by her political pledges to the Union; they cannot be abandoned for sympathies.

Coercion was just as offensive to legalistic minded Kentuckians as secession. It was their belief, an almost unanimous belief that the central government had positively no right to coerce or use force of any kind to compel the return of the secessionists. In the Senate on January 18, 1861, resolutions were presented which read:

.... we depreciate as unworthy of free-men a Union to be held together by the sword; and Kentucky will never consent to the employment of force by the strong arm of the Federal Government to coerce



into submission the States of the South that have withdrawn from the Union, but enters against it her most solemn protest. 10

Union under the Constitution was the slogan of the Kentuckians at large. Crittenden had expressed time and time again that disunion for Kentucky was the greatest of evils and a remedy for none. At the very first signs of danger to the maintenance of the Union, all the border states and particularly Kentucky took a firm stand between the extremes of the North and the South. Not favoring secession, she thought she could aid the North, not favoring coercion, she thought she could aid the South, thus her stand of "Mediatorial Neutrality" as it was called.

The old Whigs of the border states, who had launched the Constitutional Union Party, were the "Union Savers" it was claimed, but not they alone, saved Kentucky for the Union. "Mediatorial Neutrality" which was the remote means of keeping Kentucky from secession, sprang, it is said, "fullgrown from the great body of Kentuckians; it was the logical outgrowth of their characteristic conservatism,"<sup>11</sup>

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10. Journal of the Senate of Kentucky, Yeoman Office, (Frankfort, 1861), 49

11. Connelly and Coulter, 855

rather than from the muddled brains of scheming politicians. It came just as much from the "Mothers, Wives, Sisters," and Daughters of Kentucky," who bombarded the Legislature with petitions, to "guard them from the direful calamity of Civil War, by allowing Kentucky to maintain inviolate her neutrality."<sup>12</sup>

Perhaps the first significant allusion to a possible neutral position was made in an address of Robert J. Breckinridge, before an immense assembly in Lexington on January 4, 1861. He offered solutions to the difficulties confronting the state. "The first of these is," he said, "that in the progress of events, it may well become the border Slave states to unite themselves into a separate confederacy; the second is, it may well become Kentucky, under various contingencies, to assume a separate sovereign position, and act by herself."

Neutrality was formally introduced in the Legislature of Kentucky on the 29th of January, 1861. After much praying, much debating, and strange to say, almost fighting, a decision which only Kentuckians would dare to make, a de-

cision which was denounced as cowardly by her enemies; but in 1860 and early 1861 seemed to be a very rational one was summed up in the following Resolutions:

The present duty of Kentucky is to maintain her present independent position, taking sides not with the administration, nor with the seceding states, but with the Union against them both; declaring her soil to be sacred from the hostile tread of either; and if necessary, to make the declaration good with her strong right arm. 13

This neutrality was not an armed defiance of both belligerents, but a position of friendship to both. It assumed the sovereignty of the individual state, a doctrine held by most Kentuckians of that day, whether Unionist or States Right men, but it spoke unmistakably for loyalty to the Union, and a desire for its preservation. 14

This strong nationalism should not be mistaken as a minimizing the insistence of the state on the rights and powers it claimed as its own. There should be no conflict between the rights of the state and the rights of the Union; there were none, neither must there be any; if any

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13. Rebellion Record, Vol. I, 74

14. McElroy, 521

should arise, they should be compromised away. The preservation of the rights of the state was as important as the preservation of the rights of the Union. The never ending contention of Kentuckians was that the two were not incompatible; somewhat like the doctrine,<sup>15</sup> it appears, that peace must be had even if it must be fought for.

Long and intimate connection with the Federal Government had given to Kentucky's peace champion, Crittenden, a deep insight into national conditions, generally. He also knew the minds of the men who had been recently called to lead the nation, hence was able to discount the wild tales of the times, as "This is the precedent which Honest Abe weaves into weary platitudes to demonstrate that the example of our fathers is in favor of modern Republicanism."<sup>16</sup> Both the "rotten" and "hidden" plank of the Republican Platform were assailed by this partisan enthusiast, who added, "Abraham should not split the record and sit his lean person on the edge."

No one doubted the sincerity and loyalty of Crittenden when he said there was no truth in the current argu-

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15. Connelley and Coulter, II, 854

16. Louisville Journal, Letter of July 1, 1861

ment in Kentucky, that the North hated the South and that the South hated the North. "The Almighty," he said, has not made us with hearts of such malignity as to hate whole classes of our countrymen for the sins of a few men. Even at the eleventh hour he believed that the mediating policy might restore peace and he was strengthened in this conviction by the report that President Lincoln in a conversation with Garrett Davis, had declared that he would make no military movement against any state which did not offer armed resistance to the authorities of the United States, and also he had stated to Warner L. Underwood that, while he hoped that Kentucky would aid the Union in its present difficulties, he would make no effort to compel her to do so.<sup>17</sup>

When Virginia summoned a Peace Conference, Kentucky responded with renewed hopes, though the Compromise of Crittenden had been a failure. Unfortunately the carefully selected delegates from the northern states for this conference were of the "not-an-inch" type of Republicans, and James B. Clay, son of Henry Clay reported that he found at

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this would be Peace Conference "Such miserable trickery, log-rolling, and clap-trap as would disgrace a county meeting to manufacture a platform for a constable to stand on."<sup>18</sup> But another of Kentucky's hopes that wrongs could be redressed by constitutional means was destined to be frustrated.

The "overt act" of violence came. On April 12, 1861, the fatal shots were fired, the Fabian policy of procrastination had driven the irate Southerners to desperation. What would Kentucky do now? Crittenden remarked that Henry Clay would have been worth his weight in gold if but once more he could have come forth from Ashland with his irresistible eloquence and eagle glance.<sup>19</sup>

Kentucky had shown great resourcefulness along almost every line of compromise, seizing any expedient to use in staying the course of secession. With the first rush of events she could not hope to continue with compromises indefinitely.<sup>20</sup> Coercion which had been cried against so often in her legislative halls, had been perpetrated, and now grim war which she had so perseveringly tried to pre-

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18. Kentucky Yeoman, March 20, 1861

19. Louisville Journal, March 22, 1861

20. Coulter, 34

vent was now at the door. Hear the cry of the trumpeter:  
"Kentuckians! You constitute today the forlorn hope of Union. Will you stand firm and gloriously in the breach or  
will you ignobly and insanelly fly?"<sup>21</sup>

Another step must be taken by Kentucky. Mediatorial neutrality had failed. The next position to assume was armed neutrality. This was a logical stand to take by Kentuckians for they were opposed to both disunion and coercion, - a temporary expedient or sort of armed truce between those who wished to sustain the rights of the South and an administration of the national government which was sworn to uphold the Constitution of the United States as interpreted by the Supreme Court and those who felt that the general government must be sustained at all hazards even though the administration were entirely obnoxious.<sup>22</sup>

The refusal of the Governor of Kentucky to send troops "for the wicked purpose of subduing her sister Southern States" when the call came from the War Department, received the almost unanimous approval of the people and their leaders.

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21. Louisville Journal, April 20, 1861

22. Scrugham, 116

On May 10, 1861, at an informal caucus of the Union and States Rights parties, a course of action for the State was agreed upon by the six "arbitrators" appointed officially. Three questions were presented: First, the matter of a convention, to determine the will of the people by a convention. This was rejected. Second, that Kentucky take no part with either belligerent, but should maintain a position of armed neutrality, forbidding trespass within her borders by either. This question passed unanimously. Third, that an organization and equipment of an armed force for the protection of the state be provided. This was decided to be done and was entrusted to a board of five persons established by the Legislature.

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In arriving at the position of armed neutrality, there were many circuitous paths owing to the excitement caused by the excitable times and the excitable elements of the times. Innumerable conferences, much negotiating between the Union and Southern Rights parties, conventions, public and private meetings, - all betokened the seriousness of the situation. Through all ran the appeal for unanimity



of action; internal conflicts would prove fatal to the Union cause. "Of all the calamities which now impend, the most horrible would be dissension at home," wrote a Southern Rights editor.<sup>24</sup>

Lincoln was watching Kentucky closely. Some thought because it was his native state and others because he considered it one of the pivotal states in the conflict. His biographers record him saying that he hoped to have God on his side, but he must have Kentucky. "I think," he said, "to lose Kentucky is nearly the same as to lose the whole game. Kentucky gone, we cannot hold Missouri, nor as I think, Maryland."<sup>25</sup> Lincoln was a strategist. He handled the situation with such skill that it was easy for the political leaders to commit the state to neutrality, for he believed it would lead ultimately to a full cooperation with the Union. On May 24, Kentucky was officially committed to a position which its people were in the process of assuming from the secession of South Carolina. The Senate declared that Kentucky was "willing to go before the civilized world, and let her conduct pass into history and await

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24. Lexington Statesman, quoted in Kentucky Yeoman, April 18, 1861

25. Nicolay and Hay, VI, 357, 361

the candid and calm judgment of future and disinterested  
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generations.

Interesting light on the state of public opinion in Kentucky at this time, and particularly the prevailing attitude on the subject of neutrality," may be gained from the testimony taken in what were known as the "Kentucky Election Cases," growing out of the Congressional Elections in 1866. One of the witnesses, John A. Prall of Lexington upon being asked if before the election of 1861, democrats and conservatives alike were not urging in public speeches, the neutrality of Kentucky, replied: "I cannot say that both parties were urging it at the same time. I think not. My recollection of the political history of that period is, that the Union men first advocated neutrality." Just after the commencement of the war and the firing on Fort Sumter, there was a very great political agitation in the public mind of Kentucky. The Union men who were really for the Government seemed unwilling to meet the storm, and under the lead of Crittenden and others, there being then a canvas for election of delegates to the Border States Conven-

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26. Congressional Globe, Part IV and Appendix, 37 cong. 2 sess., 82; Collins, Kentucky, I, 91

tion, the Union men took a position in favor of neutrality. It can hardly be said that the other party, who were designated as secessionists, took position directly against it, because they abandoned that canvas and withdrew their ticket. When the Union men began to favor the government, the secessionists favored neutrality. The two parties did not adopt it at the same time; one advocated it as the other abandoned it." <sup>27</sup>

During the hectic days of early '61, the term "Neutrality" like those of "subjugation" and "coercion" was misleading. From all evidence it was apparent that there was no perfectly clear and consequently uniform conception existing throughout the state as to what was meant by neutrality. Men of the same political creed entertained different views on the subject, and opinions varied as to districts and individual counties. The varying shades of opinions, and the discussions, pro and con are not significant, but what is very important is, that it enabled the Union men to make the necessary steps in preparedness, namely, keeping the temper of the people unionistic, and distract-

ing the measures and councils of those inclined to seces-  
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sion.

Many believed and still believe that neutrality saved the state to the Union, and only in this way would it have been saved; however, this is only a matter of opinion. We know the prime object of neutrality was to save the Union and this at a time before the war actually was declared.

Maintaining a position after it was adopted was the problem. The difficult phases of that problem were the President of the United States and Governor of the state itself. Kentucky's relations with the Federal Government were never close and cordial, but distrustful and suspicious. Many times the state was made to feel that she was treated as a disloyal and not a part of the Union. The strongest Union paper in the state expressed the attitude of many disappointed Kentuckians, when it said: "Notwithstanding that old Abe is 'none of our funeral' it makes one feel like disowning his country when its chief magistrate makes such a fourth-rate fool of himself." Lincoln was no hero in Kentucky; the vote for him was negligible.

There was no sympathy for the Republican Party by the Kentucky Unionists; their prime objective was to prevent a break-up of the Union. In their extremely difficult position, Coulter says, "they resorted to arguments too theoretical and metaphysical to be convincing."<sup>29</sup> The administration and the government were considered as entirely separate and distinct from each other. One, the combined heritage of past generations was permanent and unchanging, the other, a temporary expression or a mood, was transitory. Kentucky had thrived and prospered under the constitution, she could fight Lincoln or the Republicans whose tenure was only four years, but the government would remain. Archibald Dixon, a prominent leader advanced the doctrine, that the contest is to be with Lincoln and not with the Union! It is Lincoln and his party who are the enemies of the country, the foes of the constitution.<sup>30</sup>

The Union-loving Prentice, when hearing of Lincoln's call for troops, said, "We are struck with mingled amazement .... The Administration is not of our choosing. We did not help to bring it into power. It is composed of our

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29. Frankfort Commonwealth, March 1, 1861.

30. Coulter, 35

deadly political foes." <sup>31</sup> Crittenden declared that Lincoln did not understand Kentucky's position, and that to send troops was to invite certain civil strife and war at home.

The Southern Rights men were advocating immediate secession, and of sending aid to the South; but these were in the minority. The great body of the Kentucky people, no matter how sorely, they were tried by the Administration at Washington, were more determined than ever, despite the failure of their compromise proposals, to cling to the Union. They were the first to join it and they would be the last to leave it.

A prominent citizen and political leader, James Guthrie said that although Lincoln gave no evidence of a warlike disposition in his inaugural, yet he suspected it, for he said, "like a serpent, it spoke with a forked tongue." <sup>32</sup> In this same speech, Guthrie, knowing that the majority of Americans in 1861 were peaceable, judging from the conservative vote of the preceding year, declared: "I want Kentucky to take her stand for peace, and appeal to that still small voice in the North crying for peace. There are religious men by

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31. Louisville Journal, April 15, 1861

32. Rebellion Record, I, 73, (doc) Speech at Louisville, April 19, 1861

habit, education and profession, whose hearts, when Kentucky calls for peace, will be reached, and whose voices will reach the powers that be, and we will have peace." <sup>33</sup>

The Republicans claimed they belonged to the school of Henry Clay, the great nationalist, and Lincoln, himself, had once been a Henry Clay Whig, hence many strays were gathered into the fold because they thought the Republicans' program had been advocated by Henry Clay. All through the campaign of 1860, that party claimed Clay and held forth for disdain the anti-Clayism of Douglas. Such a swindle was as atrocious as the "great hog swindle" in the economic world, and was soon detected by the true whiggery element of the South and particularly by Kentuckians who could not entertain the thought for one moment that there was a Black Republican spot or blot on the shining record of their idol.

Lincoln had often remarked that peace was his deliberate choice, but it seems that Lincoln's concept of peace was not the same as that of the minds untrained in the critical analysis of lawyers. Lincoln's kind of peace was the one that would have resulted had the sectional control of the

national government been unchallenged and had the choice of the electoral votes been satisfactory to the South as they had in the past. The peace of Lincoln and that of a common man were anything but synonymous.

Such statements as the following from an excellent account of the situation, show the difficulties under which loyal Union lovers labored. Dr. Mary Scrugham say, that regardless of the permanent interests of Kentucky, her antipathy for Lincoln's policy almost took her out of the Union. It was possible to prevent her immediate secession only by passing a declaration of armed neutrality as the position of the state during the strife. <sup>34</sup>

Magoffin was pro-Southern in his sympathies, but not an original secessionist. Although he vetoed almost every measure of protection passed by the legislature, they were within his constitutional right. For eighteen months the legislature closely watched the chief executive, and they mistrusted him so thoroughly that he was not permitted to borrow money from the banks of the state, since they feared it would be spent in arming soldiers against the Union.



Finally when the loan was made, the bank stipulated as a condition of the loan, that the money should not be used for aggressive purposes.

In his official message it appeared that he thought the Southern Rights sentiment would "predominate in the Legislature. It had elected John C. Breckinridge to the Senate over Joshua F. Bell, by a vote of 81 to 52. He wished a Sovereignty Convention called, and if it had been, Shaler says that the State would have been compelled to accept the decision of men who were in sympathy and kinship with the South and under the influence of mob oratory, precipitate action would have followed. <sup>35</sup>

The fact that Magoffin did not accomplish what he had trusted could be effected in the Legislature of the winter and spring of 1861, is a telling evidence of the training in politics the Kentuckians of that period possessed. The utmost diversity of opinion in all forms of political action was always present, and this very quality served to make a stampede into secession impossible.

As time went on, the affairs of Kentucky became more

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and more complicated. The great mass of the people became more nervous and excited in their struggling between their loyalty to the Government and a deep-seated mistrust of the policy of the Administration in regard to war. Neutrality was becoming more untenable, war-like preparations were noticed all around, leaders were calling on all men "to procure for themselves the most effective arms, and then, themselves form an independent organization of companies, regiments and divisions."<sup>36</sup> Such remarks as "If it requires all these men and all this money, to keep up an armed neutrality, God save the Commonwealth from an active war,"<sup>37</sup> were the opinions of many.

From May 1861 to September 1861 Kentucky was considered a neutral state but during these months she could by no means be considered peaceful or quiet. The final session of the Legislature, May 10th to the 24th, was the theater of continuous conflict between the Unionist and Southern Rights men to get control of the armament of the State. An attempt was made to take the military power from the hands of the Governor whose leaning toward the Confederacy was

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36. Congressional Globe, 37 cong., 2 sess., appendix, 83

37. Frankfort Commonwealth, May 11, 1861

known. A military board was set up and though Magoffin was a member, this legislation had taken away the constitutional rights of the Governor as commander-in-chief of the State Guards whom Buckner had moulded for the Confederacy ostensibly, and the Home Guards who were Union in sentiment. Such a compromise was really the giant seed of internal conflict. All this was considered purely a defensive measure. In the mad rush to secure arms, the Home Guards were secretly aided by the Federal Government. Lincoln had forwarded a consignment of 5,000 arms to Union sympathizers. Southern sympathizers laid plans to seize them and it was only by the efforts of John C. Breckinridge and M. C. Johnson that a bloody outbreak was averted.<sup>38</sup> A nominal price of one dollar each was the fine paid for a "Lincoln Gun" as these guns were called. Neutrality, it was claimed by the State Guards, was only a cloak to enable the Lincoln party to hide their real design to arm the adherents of Lincoln and to disarm his opponents.

Armed neutrality then, soon became a game between two factions, with the State as a stake.<sup>39</sup> The State Guards, -

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38. Daniel Stevenson, "Général Nelson, Kentucky and the Lincoln Guns," Magazine of American History, X, (August, 1883,) 115

39. Coulter, 86

the Secessionists' club, and the Home Guards, - the Unionists' club were often raised to strike because prejudices and fears were so skilfully played upon by demagogues and opportunists.

Despite all, Kentucky's loyalty to the Union could not be gainsaid. True, the various acts of the Republicans did have the effect of so many thorns in the heart of a non-sectional state, yet they would not leave the Union because of a dislike for Mr. Lincoln's recent message to Congress, but they would take refuge in the creed that they were

for the Constitution and Union, and not for Mr. Lincoln - and it is no part of their creed that a foolish opinion of a President, or a temporary mal-administration of public affairs, is a sufficient cause for breaking the nation to pieces. 40

From within and without, daily assaults were being perpetrated on Kentucky's neutrality. When the Confederate Congress passed a secret act providing for the appropriation of \$1,000,000 to be spent under the direction of the President, "to aid the people of Kentucky in repelling any

invasion or occupation of their soil by the armed forces of the United States.<sup>41</sup> Kentucky's neutrality was doomed. Governor Morton of Indiana was watching the "Civil War in Kentucky" and urged the Federal Government not to lose a moment in preparing for the crisis in Kentucky, and that he would be ready with forces in Evansville to throw into Louisville. This was in August, and on September 2nd, he is said to have remarked, "If we lose Kentucky now, God help us."<sup>42</sup> Then came the almost simultaneous invasion of the neutral soil of Kentucky by both belligerents. It is not the purpose here to conclude which army came first. Both had like lions been on the crouch for weeks and as far as can be judged there were not many minutes intervening between the individual springs.

Thus it was that the abandonment of neutrality was as has been shown, the great evil forced on Kentucky. It had served its purpose best before war was declared; afterwards, it became the tool of politicians and was doomed to an untimely death. The greatest fundamental urge for declaring for neutrality was the almost unanimous desire of

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41. Official Records, ser. I, vol. 52, part 2, 604

42. Ibid., ser. I, vol. 4, 256

the Kentucky people to act as peacemaker. When the neutral stand was taken, there was not a shadow of the entangling alliances and embarrassing commitments that followed. It was the unique and independent stand to take and proved as a chimerical and foolhardy one only when the light of history was thrown on it. If the war had been a ninety-day conflict which a large majority of the people thought at the time, then Kentucky's neutrality would have gone on record as a success, but through the long-drawn out months and years it could not have been expected to survive.

Kentucky's neutrality was regarded by the Federal Government as nationalistic in effect and from the first was cognizant of the fact that the political situation of the peace-loving Kentuckians dominated all other contingencies. It was one of those consecutive forces which made for Kentucky's importance, in fact, one of the essential elements of her importance in the Civil War period.

"Let the question be settled now,...which half a century hence, might crush constitutional liberty...and be the destruction of public liberty...to the end of time." <sup>43</sup> Such

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43. Louisville Daily Journal, June 21, 1861

were the sentiments generally in Kentucky in the attempts for a settlement of the issue of secession. Such they were when the abandonment of neutrality was inevitable.

The understanding of the true significance of Kentucky as a neutral state, or of Kentucky as peacemaker is best voiced by her historian and philosopher, Nathaniel S. Shaler, who says

I do not know where else to find the likeness of these political movements of Kentucky, so deliberate, so dignified and self-respecting as they were....When an historian arises who can treat this part of American history with the calm philosophy which it deserves, we may be sure that the effort of Kentucky to stay the tide of Civil Conflict, and to decide the difficulty by statesmanship rather than by arms, will not be set down to her discredit, but will appear as the most remarkable, as well as the most creditable, spontaneous political action in the history of that great struggle. It is not too much to say that it will be regarded as one of the best evidences of a general political capacity that this country has yet afforded. 44

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or the other states. The masses were unmistakably for peace.

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